
SENATE BILL 5838

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Senators Nobles and Rivers

1 AN ACT Relating to providing a monthly diaper subsidy for parents
2 or other caregivers receiving temporary assistance for needy
3 families; adding a new section to chapter 74.12 RCW; creating new
4 sections; and providing an effective date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that diapers are
7 a necessity for every infant. Additionally, the majority of early
8 child care programs require an adequate supply of diapers for child
9 attendance, but, with the exception of early head start, do not
10 provide diapers to families in need.

11 (2) The legislature further finds that families unable to afford
12 an adequate supply of diapers may provide less frequent diaper
13 changes to their child to maximize their supply of diapers. The
14 failure to provide adequate diaper changes is associated with an
15 increased rate of diaper dermatitis and urinary tract infection.
16 Further, there are links between diaper need and increased parenting
17 stress. Children whose parents manifest high levels of stress or
18 depression are at greater risk of social, emotional, and behavioral
19 problems.

20 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to reduce parenting stress
21 and increase parenting sense of competency by directing the

1 department of social and health services to provide a monthly diaper
2 subsidy to families with children under three who are otherwise
3 eligible for temporary assistance for needy families, thereby
4 improving parenting quality and overall child outcomes.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.12
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) Subject to funds appropriated for this specific purpose, to
8 assist with child-related necessities such as diapers, the department
9 may make additional monthly payments to applicants with children
10 under the age of three who are otherwise eligible for and receiving
11 temporary assistance for needy families.

12 (2) The department shall set the benefit amounts in rule in
13 accordance with available funds appropriated for this purpose.

14 (3) The department shall make reasonable efforts to ensure timely
15 communication to families of the new subsidy at implementation and as
16 the diaper subsidy eligibility changes.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** If specific funding for the purposes of
18 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not
19 provided by June 30, 2022, in the omnibus appropriations act, this
20 act is null and void.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act takes effect September 1, 2023.

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